

The Younger Set

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS,
Author of "The Fighting Chance," Etc.

Copyright, 1907, by Robert W. Chambers

Chapter 15

LIKE RUTHVEN had not yet dared tell Selwyn that her visit to his rooms was known to her husband. She was now afraid of her husband's malice, afraid of Selwyn's opinion, afraid of herself most of all, for she understood herself well enough to realize that if conditions became intolerable the first and easiest course out of it would be the course she'd take—wherever it led, whatever it cost or whoever was involved.

In addition to her dread and excitement, she was deeply chagrined and unhappy, and, although Jack Ruthven did not again refer to the matter—indeed, appeared to have forgotten it—her alarm and humiliation remained complete, for Gerald now came and played and went as he chose, and in her disconcerted cowardice she dared not do more than plead with Gerald in secret until she began to find the emotion consequent upon such intimacy unwise for them both.

Neergard, too, was becoming a familiar figure in her drawing room, and, though at first she detested him, his



Rosamund Fane.

patience and unflinching good spirits and his unconcealed admiration for her softened her manner toward him to the point of toleration.

And Neergard, from his equivocal footing in the house of Ruthven, obtained another no less precarious in the house of Fane—all in the beginning on a purely gaming basis. However, Gerald had already proposed him for the Stuyvesant and Proscenium clubs, and, furthermore, a stormy discussion was now in progress among the members of the famous Slowitha over an amazing proposition from their treasurer, Jack Ruthven.

This proposal was nothing less than to admit Neergard to membership in that wealthy and exclusive country club as a choice of the lesser evil, for it appeared, according to Ruthven, that Neergard, if admitted, was willing to restore to the club free of rent the thousands of acres vitally necessary to the club's existence as a game preserve, merely retaining the title to these lands for himself.

Draymore was incensed at the proposal, Harmon, Orchil and Fane were disgustedly noncommittal, but Phoenix Mottly was perhaps the angriest man on Long Island.

"In the name of decency, Jack," he said, "what are you dreaming of? Is it not enough that this man Neergard holds us up once? Do I understand that he has the impudence to do it again with your connivance? Are you going to let him sandbag us into electing him? Is that the sort of holdup you stand for? Well, then, I tell you I'll never vote for him. I'd rather see these lakes and streams of ours dry up. I'd rather see the last pheasant snared and the last covey leave for the other end of the island than buy off that Dutchman with a certificate of membership in the Slowitha."

"In that case," retorted Ruthven, "we'd better wind up our affairs and make arrangements for an auctioneer."

"All right. Wind up and be hanged!" said Mottly. "There'll be at least sufficient self respect left in the treasury to go round."

Which was all very fine, and Mottly meant it at the time, but outside of the asset of self respect there was too much money invested in the lands,

plant and buildings, in the streams, lakes, hatcheries and forests of the Slowitha. The enormously wealthy seldom stand long upon dignity if that dignity is going to be very expensive. Only the poor can afford disastrous self respect.

So the chances were that Neergard would become a member, which was why he had acquired the tract, and the price he would have to pay was not only in taxes upon the acreage, but secretly a solid sum in addition to little

Mr. Ruthven, whom he was binding to him by every tie he could pay for.

He suffered Gerald and little Ruthven to pilot him. He remained cheerfully oblivious to the snubs and indifference accorded him by Mrs. Ruthven, Mrs. Fane and others of their entourage whom he encountered over the card tables or at card suppers. And all the while he was attending to his business with an energy and activity that ought to have shamed Gerald and did at times, particularly when he arrived at the office utterly unfit for the work before him.

But Neergard continued astonishingly tolerant and kind, lending him money, advancing him what he required, taking up or renewing notes for him until the boy, heavily in his debt, plunged more heavily still in sheer desperation, only to founder the deeper at every struggle to extricate himself.

Allie Ruthven suspected something of this, but it was useless as well as perilous in other ways for her to argue with Gerald, for the boy had come to a point where even his devotion to her could not stop him. He must go on.

Meanwhile the Ruthvens were living almost lavishly and keeping four more horses. But Eileen Erroll's bank balance had now dwindled to three figures, and Gerald had not only acted offensively toward Selwyn, but had quarreled so violently with Austin that the latter, thoroughly incensed and disgusted, threatened to forbid him the house.

"The little fool," he said to Selwyn, "came here last night stinking of wine and attempted to lay down the law to me—tried to drag me into a compromise with him over the investments I have made for him! By God, Phil, he shall not control one cent until the trust conditions are fulfilled, though it was left to my discretion too. And I told him so flatly. I told him he wasn't fit to be trusted with the coupons of a repudiated South American bond!"

"Hold on, Austin. That isn't the way to tackle a boy like that!"

"Isn't it? Well, why not? Do you expect me to dicker with him?"

"No; but, Austin, you've always been a little brusque with him. Don't you think?"

"No, I don't. It's discipline he needs, and he'll get it good and plenty every time he comes here."

"I—I'm afraid he may cease coming here. That's the worst of it. For his sister's sake I think we ought to try to put up with."

"Put up! Put up! I've been doing nothing else since he came of age. He's turned out a fool of a puppy, I tell you. He's idle, lazy, dissipated, impudent, conceited, insufferable!"

"But not vicious, Austin, and not untruthful. Where his affections are centered he is always generous; where they should be centered he is merely thoughtless, not deliberately selfish. And, Austin, we've simply got to believe in him, you know—on Eileen's account."

Austin grew angrier and redder. "Eileen's account? Do you mean her bank account? It's easy enough to believe in him if you inspect his sister's bank account. Believe in him? Oh, certainly I do. I believe he's a pup enough to come sneaking to his sister to pay for all the fooleries he's engaged in. And I've positively forbidden her to draw another check to his order."

"It's that little bangled whelp Ruthven," said Selwyn between his teeth. "I warned Gerald most solemnly of that man, but"—He shrugged his shoulders and glanced about him at the linen covered furniture and bare floors. After a moment he looked up. "The game there is, of course, notorious. I—if matters did not stand as they do"—he flushed painfully—"I'd go straight to Ruthven and find out whether or not this business could be stopped."

If Allie had done her best to keep Gerald away, she appeared to be quite powerless in the matter; and it was therefore useless to go to her. Besides, he had every inclination to avoid her. He had learned his lesson.

To whom then could he go? Through whom could he reach Gerald? Through Nina? Useless. And Gerald had already defied Austin. Through Neergard, then? But he was on no terms with Neergard. How could he go to him? Through Rosamund Fane? At the thought he made a wry face. Any advances from him she would willfully misinterpret. And Ruthven? How on earth could he bring himself to approach him?

And yet he had promised Eileen to do what he could. What merit lay in performing an easy obligation? What

—IF—

You WANT a cook

You WANT a situation

You WANT help

You WANT to sell

You WANT to buy

Use the classified column of

THE NEWS.

courage was required to keep a promise easily kept? If he cared anything for her, if he really cared for Gerald, he owed them more than effortless fulfillment. So first of all, when at length he had decided, he nerved himself to strike straight at the center, and within the hour he found Gerald at the Stuyvesant club.

The boy descended to the visitors' rooms, Selwyn's card in his hand and distrust written on every feature. And at Selwyn's first frank and friendly words he reddened to the temples and checked him.

"I won't listen," he said. "They—Austin and—everybody has been putting you up to this until I'm tired of it. Do they think I'm a baby? Do they suppose I don't know enough to take care of myself? Are they trying to make me ridiculous? I tell you they'd better let me alone. My friends are my friends, and I won't listen to any criticism of them, and that settles it."

"Gerald"—

"Oh, I know perfectly well that you dislike Neergard. I don't, and that's the difference."

"I'm not speaking of Mr. Neergard. Gerald. I'm only trying to tell you what this man Ruthven really is doing."

"What do I care what he is doing!" cried Gerald angrily. "And, anyway, it isn't likely I'd come to you to find out anything about Mrs. Ruthven's second husband!"

Selwyn rose, very white and still. After a moment he drew a quiet



"What?" whispered Selwyn. breath, his clinched hands relaxed, and he picked up his hat and gloves.

"They are my friends," muttered Gerald, as pale as he. "You drove me into speaking that way."

"Perhaps I did, my boy. I don't judge you. If you ever find you need help come to me. And if you can't come and still need me send for me. I'll do what I can always. I know you better than you know yourself. Goodbye."

He turned to the door, and Gerald burst out: "Why can't you let my friends alone? I liked you before you began this sort of thing!"

"I will let them alone if you will," said Selwyn, halting. "I can't stand by and see you exploited and used and perverted. Will you give me one chance to talk it over, Gerald?"

"No; I won't!" returned Gerald hotly. "I'll stand for my friends every time! There's no treachery in me!"

"You are not standing by me very fast," said the elder man gently.

"I said I was standing by my friends!" repeated the boy.

"Very well, Gerald, but it's at the expense of your own people, I'm afraid."

"That's my business, and you're not one of 'em," retorted the boy, infuriated, "and you won't be, either, if I can prevent it, no matter whether people say that you're engaged to her!"

"What?" whispered Selwyn, wheeling like a flash. The last vestige of color had fled from his face, and Gerald caught his breath, almost blinded by the blaze of fury in the elder man's eyes.

Neither spoke again, and after a moment Selwyn's eyes fell, and he turned heavily on his heel and walked away, head bent, gray eyes narrowing to slits.

Yet through the brain's chaos and the heart's loud tumult and the clamor of pulses run wild at the insult flung into his very face the grim instinct to go on persisted, and he went on and on for her sake—on, he knew not how, until he came to Neergard's apartment in one of the vast west side constructions bearing the name of a sovereign state, and here after an interval he followed his card to Neergard's splendid suite, where a manservant received him and left him seated by a sunny window overlooking the blossoming foliage of the park.

When Neergard came in and stood on the farther side of a big oak table Selwyn rose, returning the cool, curt nod. "Mr. Neergard," he said, "it is not easy for me to come here after what I said to you when I severed my connection with your firm. You have every reason to be unfriendly toward me, but I came on the chance that whatever resentment you may feel will not prevent you from hearing me out."

"Personal resentment," said Neergard slowly, "never interferes with my business. I take it, of course, that you have called upon a business matter. Will you sit down?"

"Thank you, I have only a moment, and what I am here for is to ask you as Mr. Erroll's friend to use your influence on Mr. Erroll—every atom of your influence—to prevent him from ruining himself financially through his excesses. I ask you for his family's sake to discountenance any more gambling, to hold him strictly to his duties in your office, to overlook no more shortcomings of his, but to demand from him what any trained business man demands of his associates as well as of his employees. I ask this for the boy's sake."

"I am not aware that Gerald requires any interference from me or from you either," said Neergard coolly. "And, as far as that goes, I and my business require no interference either. And I believe that settles it."

He touched a button. The manservant appeared to usher Selwyn out. The latter set his teeth in his under lip and looked straight and hard at Neergard, but Neergard thrust both hands in his pockets, turned squarely

on his heel and sauntered out of the room, yawning as he went.

It bid fair to become a hard day for Selwyn. He foresaw it, for there was more for him to do, and the day was far from ended, and his self restraint was nearly exhausted.

An hour later he sent his card in to Rosamund Fane, and Rosamund came down presently, mystified, flattered, yet shrewdly alert and prepared for anything since the miracle of his coming justified such preparation.

"Why in the world," she said, with a flushed gaiety perfectly genuine, "did you ever come to see me?"

"It's only this," he said—"I am wondering whether you would do anything for me."

"Anything! Merce! Isn't that extremely generous, Captain Selwyn? But you never can tell. Ask me."

So he bent forward, his clasped hands between his knees, and told her very earnestly of his fears about Gerald, asking her to use her undoubted influence with the boy to shunt him from the card tables, explaining how utterly disastrous to him and his family his present course was.

"Could you help us?" he asked.

"Help us, Captain Selwyn? Who is the 'us,' please?"

"Why, Gerald and me—and his family," he added, meeting her eyes. The eyes began to dance with malice.

"His family," repeated Rosamund—"that is to say, his sister, Miss Erroll. His family, I believe, ends there, does it not?"

"Yes, Mrs. Fane."

"I see. Miss Erroll is naturally worried over him. But I wonder why she did not come to me herself! Instead of sending you as her errand ambassador."

"Miss Erroll did not send me," he said, flushing up. And, looking steadily into the smiling doll's face confronting him, he knew again that he had failed.

She smiled. "Come to me on your own errand, for Gerald's sake, for anybody's sake, for your own preferably, and I'll listen, but don't come to me on another woman's errands, for I won't listen even to you."

"I have come on my own errand," he repeated coldly. "Miss Erroll knew nothing about it and shall not hear of it from me. Can you not help me, Mrs. Fane?"

But Rosamund's rose china features had hardened into a polished smile, and Selwyn stood up wearily to make his adieu.

But as he entered his hansom before the door he knew the end was not yet, and once more he set his face toward the impossible, and once more the hansom rolled away over the asphalt, and once more it stopped, this time before the house of Ruthven.

Ruthven's greeting was a pallid stare, but as Selwyn made no motion to rise he lounged over to a couch and, half reclining among the cushions, shot an insolent glance at Selwyn, then yawned and examined the hangings on his wrist.

After a moment Selwyn said, "Mr. Ruthven, you are no doubt surprised that I am here."

"I'm not surprised if it's my wife you've come to see," drawled Ruthven. "If I'm the object of your visit, I confess to some surprise—as much as the visit is worth and no more."

The vulgarity of the insult under the man's own roof scarcely moved Selwyn to any deeper contempt and certainly not to anger.

(To be continued.)

FORTUNE FOR PAPKE.

Thunderbolt Gets \$8,000 for Next Bout, Win, Lose or Draw.

Lucrative is the fighting game for drawing cards.

Win or lose or fight to a draw, Billy Papke, middleweight pugilistic champion, will receive \$8,000 after his bout with Stanley Ketchel, at San Francisco, Thanksgiving Day. This will be the third meeting of this pair, and the fight fans are looking for one of the fastest mills seen on the coast in years.

The \$8,000 guarantee is one of the largest offered a pugilist in America in a decade. T. E. Jones, the "Thunderbolt's" manager, has just made announcement of the terms.

Both Jimmy Coffroth, of the Colma club, and Jack Gleason, of the Occidental club, of San Francisco, were bidding for the battle. Coffroth offered Papke \$7,000 as his end of the purse and Gleason raised him \$1,000, gave the principals the privilege of dividing 50 per cent of the gross receipts of the show, 60 per cent to the winner and 40 per cent to the loser, with a 20 per cent bonus to Papke.

EAGLE KILLS SHARK.

Chesapeake Sailors Tell of Remarkable Contest Witnessed on Bay.

BALTIMORE, Md., Oct. 28.—A remarkable combat between a large eagle and a shark was witnessed by Capt. Henderson and crew of the steamer Tangier on the Chesapeake Bay yesterday afternoon.

When coming out of Oceanhannock Creek they saw the eagle dive and come to the surface with a shark. Then followed a fierce struggle. The shark pulled the eagle under the water until it was almost exhausted. The fish was killed and floated dead on the water.

Members of the steamer's crew put off in a small boat and secured the eagle, although it clawed them repeatedly, and its mate, hovering close by, tried to attack them. The bird has been presented to the park zoo.

GAME LAW VIOLATION.

PARIS, Ky., Oct. 28.—In Judge Dundon's court Joe Penn Redmon and James Caldwell were each fined \$7.50 for a violation of the game law.

These Wives.

A woman never sleeps so soundly that she neglects to wake up and shut the windows when it rains, or to see what time it is when hubby comes in.

ANYTHING

LOST—Found, for sale, for rent, and vertise in the classified column of

THE NEWS.

Quality, Appearance, Price, The Three Great Points in the Purchasing of a Stove.



How often do you have an opportunity to buy stoves with these three in points their favor?

If the appearance is right, the quality may not be up to the standard; but if both are satisfactory, the price may be prohibitive.

Here we have a stove of the best quality, attractive in every way, one that will prove satisfactory in every home, and stay so, and last, but not least, at a price which every one can afford to pay.

Foster's "Winner" Range

has all the above points of Superiority, and can be bought at our store for a price easily in reach of all.

Need a Stove—Think It Over.

Grubbs & Benton, ON THE CORNER.

Capital, \$100,000
Undivided Profits, \$160,000

THE Winchester Bank

WINCHESTER, KY.

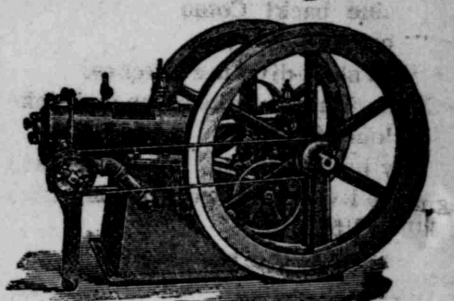
N. H. WITHERSPOON,
PRESIDENT.

W. R. SPHAR,
CASHIER.

SOLICITS YOUR
ACCOUNTS.

HAGAN

GAS AND GASOLINE Engines



SIMPLE! RELIABLE!
ECONOMICAL!

Sold Under a Positive Guarantee.

WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND PRICES.

HAGAN GAS ENGINE & MFG. CO.
INCORPORATED.
WINCHESTER, KY.

"Always the same—some times better."

Brown-Proctoria Hotel

Woodson Moss, Manager

The best in the State for the money.

1885—1908.

THE BEST INSURANCE IS THE CHEAPEST

If you are not insured find our office at once. Write or phone for rates and terms. Before insuring, see us. WE ARE THE BEST.

JOUETT'S INSURANCE AGENCY,
Simpson Building. Both Phones 71.

SEE

GILBERT & BOTTO

FOR

Fresh & Cured Meats

Fish, Vegetables, Country Produce

BOTH PHONES OPERA HOUSE BLOCK

Conkwright Transfer and Ice Co.

Crating, Handling and Hauling Furniture, Pianos, Etc., a Specialty.

NO. 19 North Main Street. Both Phones

WINCHESTER TAILORING COMPANY,

M. & C. H. McKINNEY, Props.

Clothes Cleaned, Pressed and Repaired.

DRY CLEANING AND DYING A SPECIALTY.

Over Allan & Murphy's Store opp. Court House

—CALL ON—

NELSON, The Transfer Man

by day or night, if you want your baggage transferred.

OFFICE—Home Phone 94; Night Phone 339.

HIGH GRADE PHOTOGRAPHY!

Remember that high-grade photographs and portraits make appropriate Xmas presents. Place your orders with EARP, The Artist, now, and avoid the rush during the holidays.

Ramsey Transfer Co.

Hauling of All Kinds

Furniture Moving a Specialty

HOME PHONE